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'Third Age' under Neoliberalism: From Risky Subjects to Human Capital

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'Third Age' under Neoliberalism: From Risky Subjects to Human Capital

In this paper, I trace the discursive evolution of the phrase 'Third Age.' Focusing on its increasing appearances in lifestyle articles within popular Anglo-American print media during the past three decades, I argue that 'Third Age' operates as a category of neoliberal governance. More specifically, through the analysis of 'Third Age' I uncover a shift in the kind of subjectivity ageing subjects are called upon to cultivate—from subjects imbued with risk for themselves and for society to savvy entrepreneurs who take risks and diligently maximize their self-worth. This shift from risk-oriented to entrepreneurial subjects, I suggest, is accompanied by a temporal modification relating to the neoliberal imperative to invest in oneself. One of the ways neoliberal governance operates is through a cost-benefit calculus where subjects are encouraged to make investments in the present with the promise of future returns. My analysis reveals that from the mid-2000s onwards this future-oriented approach is replaced with a 'here and now' temporality, whereby ageing subjects are incited to make investments in the present as a form of living in the moment, rendering the future less relevant. This finding challenges existing literature on neoliberal rationality that underscores its future-oriented temporality.

Keywords: ageing, neoliberalism, third age, here and now, entrepreneurialism, temporality.

'Turning 60 needn't be a death sentence,' opens a *Courier Mail* article from 11 June, 1985, one of the first newspaper articles in English to use 'Third Age' as a concept depicting ageing and old age. While explicitly imploring its 60-something-year-old readers to believe that there still is something worthy in their lives, the article addresses them as essentially prone to frailty and deterioration. Elderly people who make the best of their remaining years include those who join literary groups, take painting lessons or visit each other at home to chat or play their records together. According to the article, such activities help ameliorate third-agers' impending regression, while the fact that they are closer to the "finish line" is underscored repeatedly, albeit in implicit ways. Finally, the incitement to be 'more active, and mentally stimulated' is reiterated, since disuse of valuable skills, as the article explains, 'leads to dependence and dependence means community cost' (Jordell 1985).

It thus seems that the call on third-agers to keep themselves busy and active revolves around the conception that they are imbued with risk, both for themselves and society; consequently, they are incited to cultivate particular lifestyle habits that would enable them to remain healthy and safe as long as possible.

Three decades later, representations of ageing in popular media present an entirely different narrative. Not only does 'Third Age' denote a longer period of time, but it has increasingly come to signify new beginnings. With proliferating appearances in dozens of Hollywood films,¹ a wide range of mainstream newspapers (where entire sections have been launched to cover ageing people's lives), hundreds of self-help books and best-selling novels, as well as on various social media platforms (such as *Twitter* and *Instagram*), people aged 65 and over are being portrayed as pursuing life-changing adventures and experiences of self-discovery. Indeed, this new 'Third Age' luminosity (McRobbie 2008) seems to register the ageing process as an opportunity to start living a meaningful and happy life.

In what follows, then, I critically examine this shift of representation while focusing on the category of 'Third Age' and what it comes to signify. Drawing on newspaper articles that employ the term 'Third Age'—from its first appearance in the print media in the 1980s to the present moment—I track the discursive shifts in the way that ageing individuals as well as ageing processes are depicted and represented. Emphasizing how the discursive practices through which ageing subjectivity is shaped assist modes of governance (Foucault 1990), my analysis focuses on two interrelated claims. First, I propose that the unfolding of 'Third Age' as a category is inextricably tied to the intensification of neoliberalism not merely as an economic policy, but, rather, as an order of normative reason that colonizes all spheres of life (Larner 2000; Brown 2015; Harvey 2005). Configuring all activities and human beings through market terms and metrics (Brown 2015, p. 30), neoliberal rationality as a dominant

mode of governance intensifies political and cultural tendencies of privatization, individualization and responsabilization. I argue that the discursive evolution of the term 'Third Age'—i.e. the shifts in the themes, aspirations and characters it denotes and signifies over time—can be seen as emblematic of the increasing neoliberalization of the ageing process and of old age that has taken place over the past three decades. I further suggest that increasing neoliberalization has entailed a shift in the kind of subjectivity that ageing individuals are called upon to cultivate: namely, from a subjectivity that is based on risk to an entrepreneurial subjectivity.

Second, I show how neoliberal rationality operates on 'Third Age' subjects through the regulation of time. As scholars have already shown, neoliberalism relies on a future oriented cost-benefit calculus through which individuals are encouraged to make investments in the present moment with the promise of future returns (Brown 2015; Rottenberg 2014a, 2014b, 2017). Indeed, as I show, this temporal calculus is already apparent in ageing individuals' interpellation in the early years following the initial appearance of the term 'Third Age' and intensifies in the 1990s as the risk discourse is gradually replaced by a discourse of entrepreneurship and pro-activism. However, from the mid-2000s onwards this future oriented cost-benefit calculus is supplanted by an emphasis on the 'here and now,' a temporality in which the present moment bears value in and of itself. Under this new modality of time, it seems that the future is no longer extended towards an endless or limitless horizon, but rather is condensed and contracted into a continuous 'here and now' moment.

The paper begins with a brief description of how the term 'Third Age' coalesced during a period in which there was growing cultural ambivalence toward the general increase in the number of ageing people. I then trace the way the term was deployed within lifestyle articles from mainstream newspapers, while focusing on the shift in the kind of interpellative address these articles carry out. More specifically,

looking at how self-investment is construed, I analyze how the move from the risk discourse to the more recent calls on ageing subjects to relate to themselves as entrepreneurs entails a temporal shift to the 'here and now,' which seems to be increasingly lauded as the "correct" temporal-normative framework for making decisions about how to live one's life. By way of conclusion, I suggest that these interrelated shifts expose the discursive ways through which neoliberal rationality produces ageing subjects.

'Third Age' Emerges on the Cultural Scene

First analyzed by British historian Peter Laslett in his 1989 book *A Fresh Map of Life*, 'Third Age' describes the time period in one's life between the completion of primary family and career responsibilities, on the one hand, and old age and infirmity, on the other.² Following American psychologist Bernice Neugarten's famous 1974 call for scholars and professionals to pay attention to an emerging group of older adults aged between 55-75 (Neugarten 1974), Laslett's book constitutes the first text to popularise the phrase 'Third Age' (Carr & Komp 2011, p. 3) as a key concept for scholars from multiple disciplines (Mein et al. 1998; Silva 2008).

In their theorization of the 'Third Age' as a key category in the reconstruction of later life in the 21st century (2002) Chris Gilleard and Paul Higgs underscore that Laslett's conceptualization of the 'Third Age' had emerged as part of a "counter-discourse" (Gilleard & Higgs 2002) to previous approaches within social gerontology that emphasized disengagement and dependency in relation to ageing people. As such, Laslett's new framework for dividing the human life course is laid out in his book while associating the 'Third Age' with greater possibilities and potential:

First comes an era of dependence, socialization, immaturity and education; second an era of independence, maturity and responsibility, of earning and of saving; third an era of personal fulfillment; and fourth an era of final dependence, decrepitude and death (Laslett 1991, p. 4).

As Laslett underscores, 'Third Age,' which he refers to as the 'crown of life' and depicts as a phase of personal achievement and self-realization (1991, p. 78), is rigidly distinguished from the 'Fourth Age,' which is associated with frailty and death (1991, p. 4). The division of the ageing process into distinct phases—separating the 'young-old' from the 'old-old' (Neugarten 1974, p. 190-1)—tapped into a growing need in the field of gerontology in the late 1980s and the 1990s for an advanced conceptualization of the ageing process that will capture the differing levels of functional and social abilities among ageing people (Bülow & Söderqvist 2014). 'Third Age,' as part of this process, began to gain popularity within professional literature. Today, this notion of the 'Third Age' as a critical time period within the ageing process—both for ageing individuals as well as the society in which they live—has become common sense (see also Gilleard & Higgs 2002).

It is important to underscore, however, that the emergence of the 'Third Age' as a category feeds into an increasing anxiety in Western society about the global growth in the number of ageing individuals.³ This anxiety has been expressed by a plethora of actors and in numerous platforms. The tone of these documents has sometimes been described as an "alarmist rhetoric" (Katz 1992; Williams, Wadleigh & Chen 2010), at times framing the ageing population as an "apocalyptic demography" (Robertson 1997; Gee & Gutman 2000), or a "Silver Tsunami" caused by increased life expectancy and declining fertility rates. A paradigmatic example of this sensibility of the ambivalent relation to the elderly can be seen in the preface of the *World Health Organization* report from 2011 called 'Global Health and Aging':

The world is facing a situation without precedent: We soon will have more older people than children and more people at extreme old age than ever before. As both the

proportion of older people and the length of life increase throughout the world, key questions arise. Will population aging be accompanied by a longer period of good health, a sustained sense of well-being, and extended periods of social engagement and productivity, or will it be associated with more illness, disability, and dependency? (WHO 2011).

As this report exemplifies, population ageing is discussed, analyzed and measured as both a major global achievement and as an acute threat to public health and the global economy. The report's ambivalent tone towards these demographic trends is further elaborated in the two opposite scenarios laid out by its authors, underscoring that population ageing can lead either to flourishing or crisis. It is precisely within this nexus of dichotomized scenarios—between opportunity on the one hand, and risk on the other—that discussions of the 'Third Age' unfold.

Since its first appearance in the United Kingdom in the 1980s and in the United States in the 1990s (Laslett 1991, p. 3), the 'Third Age' has gained currency, increasingly becoming an important social and analytical category in the perception of ageing individuals and old age. However, rather than focusing on its development inside the field of gerontology or other adjacent disciplines (Mein, Higgs et al. 1998; Bass 2000; Silva 2008; Higgs & Jones 2009), I am interested in what the term 'Third Age' sets out to do as a discursive trope (Butler 2013) within popular and mainstream media. In what follows, I therefore provide a bottom-up understanding of how the category has emerged and unfolded in the Anglo-American mainstream print media.

'Third Age' in the Papers

Methodology and General Overview

In order to trace how 'Third Age' has been conceptualized and disseminated within everyday life through the medium of newspapers and magazines, I carried out an

extensive search of English-written media in the LexisNexis database.⁴ In the first stage, my search was purposive (Patton 2014). Using Boolean logic,⁵ I gathered all the articles that mention two specific terms, 'Third Age' and 'Ageing' together over a period of 31 years, from January 1, 1985 when the terms first appeared, until December 31, 2015. The two terms appeared in 3,689 articles, ranging from news coverage to columns, editorials, essays, book and film reviews. The search reveals that the number of times 'Third Age' appears together with 'Ageing' gradually increases over the course of the past three decades: from 54 articles during the first five year period 1985-1989 to 1,898 articles during the five year period 2011-2015—an increase of approximately 3,500 percent.

In the second stage, I created a sample of 197 articles by using all the articles that were published during a single year, every ten years—1985 (#2), 1995 (#22), 2005 (#80), 2015 (#93). The aim of creating the sample was to reduce the scope of the data and to allow a closer thematic examination of the articles. Hence the reduction of the data was conducted deductively and systematically: I included articles according to the predeterminate criterion of their time of publication as well as the inclusion of the two keywords I was interested in.

In the third stage, I identified and elucidated emergent themes and patterns within the data, utilizing an inductive analysis strategy (Patton 2002, p. 56-7, 453; Patton 2014). Consequently, I did not define in advance fixed keywords in order to code and classify the data into categories. Rather, through careful, continuous and iterated reading and screening of each article in the sample, I formulated a set of categories that depict the various contexts within which 'Third Age' is employed in the articles. Similar methodology has been utilized in several other studies investigating representations of ageing within written print media (Rozanova 2006; Rozanova, Northcott & McDaniel 2006; Rozanova 2010; Sawchuk 2015).⁶

Deploying inductive analysis, the categorization of the data began with specific observations that led toward finding general patterns (Patton 2014). During my iterated reading and screening, I paid special attention to several aspects: What is the explicit main subject that the article is concerned with; What other, perhaps broader, subjects is 'Third Age' associated with in the article; Whether there is a specific section in the newspaper in which the article was published; What is the article's overall thematic structure, as well as how does an article refer to its readers (for example, an article that refers to the readers as potential consumers might be related to lifestyle and leisure). Led by these questions, I ultimately organized the data by classifying it into 8 different categories: (1) Pension/Social Security, (2) Ageing population as a threat for public systems, (3) Lifestyle and Leisure, (4) Third-Agers in the Workforce, (5) Dealing with Personal Frailty/Loneliness, (6) Third-Agers as Economic-Consumerist Force, (7) Research on Ageing, (8) Other.

The thematic categorization of the articles elucidated that there is an increase in the proportion of articles that relate to lifestyle issues and leisure relative to all the articles over the years—0/2; 12/22; 45/80; 66/93. I therefore decided to focus on this development in my analysis. Providing readers with tips and personal testimonial-based advice, lifestyle articles relate to different aspects of third-agers' period of post-retirement, ranging from issues of physical maintenance and well-being to issues of family, relationships and the meaning of life.⁷ Building on the insights of cultural and media theorists such as Stuart Hall (1997) and Angela McRobbie (2013) who analyze the mass media as a regulatory space for shaping the popular imagination, I suggest that these articles both reflect and constitute an important venue in the production, shaping and circulation of the attitudes, interests and wishes about and of this emerging 'Third Age' population.

Next, using critical discourse analysis (Gill 2000; Wetherell 2001; Scharff 2015; Scharff 2016) to examine the thematic structure of these lifestyle articles as well as the discursive patterns and practices they employ, I interrogated two central issues: (1) the type of interpellation these texts help carry out or perform, and (2) the way that time is regulated through these texts.

Importantly, in an attempt to analyze how the conception of ageing subjectivities and their temporalities have changed over the years, my analysis follows the shift in the way lifestyle articles relate to the idea of self-investment. As I show, during the early years, articles mentioning 'Third Age' deal primarily with physical fitness, and shift focus in later years to self-investment, while simultaneously moving from the corporeal dimension to more affective—mental and emotional—aspects of ageing.

In analyzing the formation of 'Third Age' as a neoliberal category, I build more specifically on scholars such as Wendy Brown (2015) and Michel Feher (2009) who define neoliberalism as a normative order of reason that became dominant in the past three decades (Brown 2015, p. 9). As a governing rationality, neoliberalism converts all aspects of human life through economic logics and metrics, whereby subjects are produced as potential entrepreneurs whose conduct is evaluated through calculations of possible profit. Consequently, individuals themselves are cast as capital, and are exhorted to constantly make various self-investments to enhance their own self-worth (Feher 2009).

In what follows, then, I highlight emerging forms of the idealized ageing subjectivity, while discussing the different stages in the way neoliberal rationality is operationalized during each phase within the discursive evolution of 'Third Age.' It is crucial to underscore, however, that while my analysis emphasizes the way neoliberal

rationality operates to govern subjects' ageing process, it does not suggest that ageing subjects' agency diminishes. Rather, agency constitutes a crucial part in ageing subjects' interpellation under neoliberalism, given that its rationality is based on the constitution of a subject that has free choice and is an autonomous agent. I therefore suggest that alongside the importance of acknowledging new forms of agency among ageing individuals (Liang & Lou 2012; Kirby & Kluge 2013; Tulle 2015; Stephens et al. 2015), it is also pertinent to critically inquire how these forms might affirm hegemonic modes of governance.

(1) Corporeal Self-Investment (1985-1995)

Between 1985 and 1990, articles that employ the term 'Third Age' refer to the ageing readership mainly indirectly. Indeed, in many articles the target audience of these articles is not age specific but rather the general public, even though their subject matter is the 'Third Age' population. These articles provide general reports on ageing individuals, their motivations, health and needs. Moreover, these accounts of third-agers' interests are discussed as inherently connected to public health risks and consequently, they facilitate the proliferation of the risk discourse. For example, in an article published in the *Washington Post* (5 March, 1986) under the title: 'Getting Psyched: Good Intentions Are Not Enough,' ageing individuals' state of health and fitness are framed as a social problem, while the article also clearly aims to encourage physical fitness among this population. The article opens with the threatening exposition:

While many older people know that they should exercise, and in fact feel better when they do, putting their good intentions into practice is another matter.

People over 50 now constitute over half of the U.S. population, and are one of the fastest growing segments. In addition, the 65-and-older group increases by an estimated 1,000 people per day. Between 1970 and 1980, the number of people over 65 increased by 27.9 percent.

But most do not exercise.
(Vogel 1986).

While the 'Third Age' population is not the central addressee of the article, its reproachful tone suggests that this problem emanates from ageing individuals' general failure to commit to physical fitness. According to the article, given the destructive disposition of third-agers, the ageing of the population becomes even more threatening than it already is.

Conceiving third-agers' habits of physical exercise as a social problem, and even as a massive demographic threat (as the article clearly puts it: '[...] the 65-and-older group increases by an estimated 1,000 people per day') is typical of the risk discourse, which conceptualizes risk as a result of the lifestyle choices made by individuals (Lupton 1993, p. 427); these choices, moreover, are understood to be modifiable once knowledge and awareness of the danger are brought to the fore. In other words, the causes for health threats are attributed to the individual through the risk discourse. Not only does the risk discourse displace the real reasons for ill-health, placing them fully upon the individual, but it also helps to provoke social condemnation towards morally irresponsible subjects. Through such operations, this discourse succeeds to exert "[...] control over the body politic as well as the body corporeal" (Lupton 1993, p. 425).

Only later in the *Washington Post* article, the ageing readership is addressed directly, where tips for how to introduce physical exercise into their day-to-day routine are provided:

When the flesh is willing to work out but the spirit is weak, try these motivation suggestions: Establish specific days and times for exercise. Stick to the routine. Work out with friends.

[...] There are a lot of people we come in contact with who want or need to exercise regularly but need someone to help motivate them. Be aware that you don't have to -- and probably shouldn't -- do everything shown in a class or on a videocassette.

Instructors should make it clear that they do not have to do everything [...] (Vogel 1986).

Interestingly, when it comes to concrete tips for ageing individuals on how to start doing physical activity, the dramatic and urgent tone with which the article opens is replaced with a softened, instructive tone.

Another example of this instructive tone can be seen in an article published in *The Globe and Mail* (7 April, 1989) under the title: 'Efforts beefed up to get seniors going,' where the problem of ageing individuals' reluctance to exercise ('The elderly don't like the word "fitness"') is discussed once again in relation to their growing share in the population: 'In 1981,' the reader is told, 'there were 2.4 million adults aged 65 and over in Canada, making up 9.8 per cent of the population. Statistics Canada projects that number will surge to almost 24 per cent in 2031' (Fisher 1989). In the article, a specific example of a popular fitness course in a community center in Ottawa is described through an interview with its instructor:

The course design takes note of the music selection to ensure it doesn't have a frenetic beat that would cause injuries as seniors strove to keep up, said Hudson. And, it helps motivation because there are fewer dropouts as a result.

Imagery is also used to maximum effect. Seniors are encouraged to visualize that they are leading an orchestra, riding a horse or rowing a boat, making it easier for their bodies to follow the movements of the instructor. With a New Age approach to life in the Third Age, Hudson is on a crusade to jettison the many actual and perceptual barriers to seniors' physical activity (Fisher 1989).

And in later part in the article, fitness is discussed from another angle:

The search for appropriate physical activities need not be a major production nor require a heavy sweat. Rather, fitness can be derived from activities as benign as gardening (which is great for balance, mobility and strength), household chores, tai chi, swimming, dancing, even mall-walking. For the more frail adult, activities such as bean-bag tossing, crocheting and cooking are sufficient to stimulate higher levels of flexibility and mobility (Fisher 1989).

These examples show that while elders' (newly termed 'third-agers') physical maintenance is viewed as imperative for alleviating the probable burden on society in

the future—and indeed exercise is discussed as an urgent mission—these ageing individuals are referred to as potentially frail and therefore in need of extra-care and patient guidance. As depicted above, this guidance involves a noticeable effort to approach third-agers' physical fitness in a way that assumes that this age group is utterly distinctive from other segments of the population (as is often customary when children are the subject matter). They are instructed to perform exercise very carefully and are often warned not to overburden their bodies with too much activity. Furthermore, they are provided with tips and techniques to overcome a lack of motivation or fear of getting injured during exercise. Daily habits, such as household chores and mall-walking, are reframed as suitable physical activity for this age group.

Given this particular, perhaps child-like interpellation, the address to third-agers emphasizes the social and cultural perception of them as superfluous. At the same time as they are being framed as a social burden on the general public's health, economy and other systems, they are addressed in a therapeutic, instructive tone that constantly refers to them as potentially feeble and dependency prone. This kind of address construes them as requiring special resources, while all the while they are seen as simultaneously imposing risk on others and as imbued with risk in and of themselves. Furthermore, I suggest, this framing of ageing people as subjects who encumber social systems and networks more and more with their special needs and risks as they age, ultimately reinforces the perception of them as unworthy humans, and thus disposable.

The prominence of risk in ageing individuals' physical fitness exists not only in the way they are referred to but also it informs the way and the reason given for encouraging their fitness in the first place. As mentioned above, the idea of physical fitness among ageing individuals is understood as something that will ameliorate the potential repercussions of the demographic change, i.e. getting more ageing people

into shape will reduce their dependency and need for medical care. Physical training for the elderly is thus a matter of managing the risk they potentially pose for the population at large. A micro-level version of this is the assertion that physically active ageing people will likely lengthen their ability to stay active and autonomous. In its two versions, risk management seems to be introduced into the everyday life of third-agers through the paradigm of physical fitness as a lifestyle choice.

Moreover, and as many scholars have asserted, the pervasiveness of fitness as an ideal lifestyle choice becomes especially prominent in popular as well as disciplinary discourses where the ageing process and third-agers are being discussed (Katz 2000; Vidovicová 2005; Rudman 2006; Marhánková 2010; Allain & Marshall 2017).⁸ With the political backdrop of the declining welfare state, fitness in old age is considered as a personal resource for mobility and choice (Katz 2000), and is based on the indisputable association of activity with well-being. As such, it is framed as a form of self-investment which is both inflicted as an imperative for morally responsible seniors and is widely embraced as 'an antidote to pessimistic stereotypes of decline and dependency' (Katz 2000, p. 135). While it is clearly entrenched in the risk discourse, I suggest that the turn towards fitness as a new lifestyle ideal for third-agers denotes a shift in the way ageing people are exhorted to relate to their own ageing. More than merely a form of self-care, the fitness paradigm directs ageing people to treat their bodily condition as substantially amenable to their personal management which could either increase or reduce its value. Moreover, the framing of fitness as a lifestyle matter fortifies its encoding as an exercise of personal choice and autonomy. Thus, not only does this ideal assist modes of responsabilization, it also reframes the ageing process as an essentially individualized experience. As such, I argue that the emergence of fitness as an ideal for third-agers should be understood as pointing to the

beginnings of the neoliberalization of the ageing process, with the risk discourse constituting one of its earlier modalities.

The emergence and construction of the physical fitness paradigm within the discourse of risk is also inscribed within a specific kind of temporality. The perception of exercise in the 'Third Age' as risk management registers a specific temporal mode in which ageing individuals are encouraged to engage in physical activity in the present in order to increase the likelihood of benefiting from such fitness in the (perhaps near) future. As the *Globe and Mail* 1989 article clearly exemplifies, physical fitness is a matter of calculating and maneuvering time itself:

Seniors have an 'enormous regenerative capacity' and with a proper program they can derive up to a 50 per cent improvement in their physical condition, said the Council on Aging's Norma Strachan.

"Fitness is the ability to carry out daily activities, enjoy leisure time and to have enough energy left over to meet unforeseen emergencies" [...] (Fisher 1989).

A similar approach is evident also in an article titled 'The third age finds its second wind' published in *The Times* (18 July, 1991):

[...] [T]here are real drawbacks to being a member of the third age. Sedentary jobs, the use of the car and the lack of hard physical labor have contributed to the rise of osteoporosis, which now affects 70 per cent to 80 per cent of women and 50 per cent to 60 per cent of men by their mid-sixties. The loss of bone density can, however, be remedied by exercise [...]

Even where there has been a lifetime of bad habits, amends can be made. [...] Are the retired, with both the time and the impetus to improve their health, the new fitness enthusiasts? (Gill 1991).

As both examples underscore, the emerging paradigm of physical fitness for repairing the body—for healing and even for improving it—is informed by the discourse of risk and is fundamentally future-oriented. Framed as '[...] the ability to carry out daily activities, enjoy leisure time and to have enough energy left over to meet unforeseen emergencies' (Fisher 1989), this new form of corporeal self-investment encourages

third-agers to invest their present moment in physical activity in order to preserve and improve their physical state for the sake of minimizing prospective damages and illness in the future. Importantly, the future under this temporality is shaped as a threat of decrepitude and dependence against which ageing individuals must armor themselves as much as possible.

(2) Ageing Slower (1992-2000)

A shift in the general cultural attitude towards ageing begins to occur from the mid-1990s onwards. The growing number of articles that include the use of the 'Third Age' as a concept coincides with a demand on the part of various journalists, publicists, social entrepreneurs and different public figures for a new vision of ageing. Many articles published in the popular print media from this period protest against social norms and demand the right of third-agers to fulfill themselves and their potential. In these articles, the need to discard older images of ageing is stressed, while third-agers' growing share in the population and the lengthened life expectancy are positioned as the reason for this necessary awakening. The massive number of articles raising the question of how to approach ageing and ageing individuals indicates that this is a transitional period where ageing individuals are addressed more and more as potential entrepreneurs, and less as risky subjects. This transition points to dramatic developments in the way ageing subjectivities are shaped. As I discuss below, articles from this period demonstrate that within the expansion of third-agers' possibilities, as well as the focus on protracted sense of time, there is an increased emphasis on individual enterprises that focus particularly on enhancing one's own self-worth.

Betty Friedan's 1993 *The Fountain of Age* captures this moment of transition in the new conceptualization of the 'Third Age.' Friedan gained her reputation as a feminist and activist who debunked dominant myths of femininity in the 1960s in her

path-breaking book, *The Feminine Mystique*. Her fame helped to ensure that the media endowed her new book with a similar monumentality. Indeed, as the title of an article in *The Toronto Star* (14 November, 1993) proclaims: 'Betty Friedan's new crusade fights fear and myths of ageing. Feminist says many of us can stay vital well into our 80s' (Dunphy 1993). Friedan's book, which also became a national best-seller, taps into the changing cultural tone towards ageing as depicted on its back cover:

Struggling to hold on to the illusion of youth, Friedan wrote, we have denied the reality and evaded the new triumphs of growing older. We have seen age only as decline. In this powerful and very personal book, Betty Friedan charted her own voyage of discovery, and that of others, into a different kind of aging. Friedan found ordinary men and women, moving into their fifties, sixties, seventies, discovering extraordinary new possibilities [...] *The Fountain of Age* suggests new possibilities for every one of us, [...] It demolishes those myths that have constrained us for too long and offers compelling alternatives for living one's age as a unique, exuberant time of life, on its own authentic terms (Friedan 1993).

This excerpt is exemplary of predominant voices during the mid-1990s and onwards, voices that call upon their readers to reinvent old age and to perceive the 'Third Age' as a time-period of possibilities and growth rather than risk and decline. 'So decline is because of death, not ageing,' Friedan is quoted saying in an interview (Dunphy 1993), expressing the attempt to overturn the perception of ageing within the cultural sphere.

The prominence of various calls to redefine ageing for those who are 'healthier and living longer than ever before' (Wilkinson 1995) is most evident in the print media during the five-year period between 1995-2000. However, this redefinition is also followed by a change in the way time is conceived. Defined as a time of opportunities and renewal, the 'Third Age' becomes a time-period that has no rigid or clear boundaries and is thus more flexible than previously thought. Under this shift, the future is transformed from being a threat into being an opportunity. This temporal shift is particularly noticeable in articles that address physical fitness issues, which continue to be prominent. While emphasizing the importance of maintaining health and

physical functionality in the present, these articles are no longer geared merely towards minimizing the risks of the body's ageing in the future. Rather, what is emphasized is physical fitness as a way of living life to the fullest, where the purpose is to enjoy and fulfill the later years of leisure.⁹

Apparently, then, it seems that alongside the higher proportion of lifestyle articles (in comparison to other articles that discuss pension issues, for instance) during this time-period, there is a shift in the way they are structured. Rather than focusing merely on maintaining one's health in the 'Third Age,' physical fitness is located as part of a wider approach of *improving one's overall condition of being*. Consequently, the injunction to be fit is often discussed in relation to forms of self-improvement in other areas, such as gaining new professional skills, with which readers are being implicitly incited to engage.

I go on to suggest that these shifts point to several crucial developments in the dissemination of neoliberal rationality. First, the increased appearance of ageing in lifestyle articles intensifies the focus on the individual as the main subject matter, while wider, structural social and economic constraints that affect people's ageing process are pushed aside. Second, by linking physical fitness to possibilities that are not only health-related but are part of the self's overall improvement, these lifestyle articles—expand the responsibility of individuals to take care of themselves, while implying that this responsibility includes making *something more* out of themselves. Importantly, the intensified focus on the individual well as on self-improvement is correlated with the temporal shift that conceptualizes the ageing process as having a potentially open horizon of time.

For example, in an article published in *The Independent* (8 September, 1998) under the title 'Pipe and slippers? Pass me my running shoes; We're all living longer.

But will we have the mental powers to actually enjoy our later years of leisure?' the new attitude towards ageing and time is demonstrated:

In many ways, Mrs MacArthur is typical of today's older generation, in that she is entering the "third age" in much better shape than her parents did. Her healthy condition bears out the latest research, which suggests that we are not just living longer, but staying healthy longer. A new generation, not of grey panthers, but of grey cheetahs, is emerging (Ferriman 1998).

With the new image of grey cheetahs, ageing individuals are depicted as facing a horizon of possibilities, which they are entering with great energy. While the article does relate specifically to the risks of ageing, it does so in a way that emphasizes the body's flexibility:

Professor Kirkwood says that in order to live longer we need to enhance the maintenance function of our body and reduce the damage to which our cells are exposed. The ageing process works through the life-long accumulation of damage to the body, rather than being clock-driven (Ferriman 1998).

Accordingly, the story of Barbara MacArthur, around which the article revolves, concludes with the notion of time as an open horizon, as well as with her excitement about the future and the opportunities it might hold for her:

She took hormone replacement therapy for five years and has been told that her bone density is good. Now that she has been commended for her physical strength, she feels confident about her future. 'I would like to become a computer programmer after I finish the course. I think life really begins at 71' (Ferriman 1998).

Corporeal self-investment in the present is thus posed as a way to repair and improve the body in order to reduce later risks; however, it is now articulated more clearly as enabling greater opportunities to maximize personal potential (a concept that appears as a synonym for making the most out of life's opportunities), rather than simply as a mode of slowing one's decline during the ageing process. Furthermore, it is evident that while the article begins with the wider issue of physical fitness of third-agers as a cohort, it soon zooms in on the story of one individual, Barbara McArthur, who is brought perhaps as an exemplar. It is through McArthur's story that readers understand

physical fitness or personal health condition as constituting departure points to broader possibilities.

Crucially, McArthur's story reflects that the changing conception of time and the change in the type of subjectivity that is idealized intertwine. The incitement to engage in a pro-active and self-managed life appears alongside the shift in time, where the temporal horizon is depicted as opening-up, allowing the individual to pursue further opportunities. I thus suggest that the expansion of the temporal horizon alongside the increasing neoliberalization of ageing subjectivity ultimately intensifies the recasting of subjects as human capital. As the article above indicates, thanks to the savvy (and timely) maintenance of her body's health condition, McArthur now enjoys a flexible 'Third Age' with presumably more time lying ahead. In other words, the neoliberal cost-benefit calculus appears, only now in an extended version. Investments in the present are projected towards the future, and even promise a protracted sense of time. Ageing subjects are now encouraged to make investments in the present with the promise of benefiting from them in the future; yet this future is now more open as well as filled with potential gains, as opposed to the early years of the 'Third Age,' where the framing of the future as abundant with potential threats was entangled with a notion of this future as immanent. Moreover, these future benefits are no longer concentrated around managing risks but rather around managing one's opportunities. Ageing subjects are thus encouraged to entrepreneurialize themselves. In other words, ideal ageing is presented as a strategic pursuit of new projects that revolve mostly around investments in the self, preferably for profit.

During the 2000s articles continue to reflect and disseminate neoliberal rationality as part of popular discourse. The ideal 'Third Age' subject is presented as a self-managed entrepreneur who has increasing opportunities due to an expanded temporal horizon.¹⁰ In line with this, business entrepreneurship emerges as a new

theme within print media's coverage of third-agers from the 2000s into the mid-2000s. One of the earliest articles that introduces the topic was published in *The Journal UK* (14 December, 1998) under the title: "'Third age" is a growing force; Start-ups by over-50s on the increase.' The article reports on new research revealing that '[b]usinesses set-up by entrepreneurs aged 50 years and over are a growing force in the UK small business sector' (Finn 1998). The author explains that these third-age entrepreneurs enter upon their business adventure after being rejected in the ageist job market. In a way, this content might gesture towards the persistent state of risk and precarity embedded within everyday life under neoliberal regimes, here embodied in ageing people's lack of financial security and protection. However, in another similar article from *The Guardian* (27 April, 1999) published under the title: 'Age is no bar to success; Starting up in business appeals to many over-50s more than putting their feet up ever would,' a supplementary psychological explanation for this phenomenon appears:

[...] many are people who feel constrained by working for somebody else. There's a strong sense of freedom coming through in this research, of people being able to do what they want in their own time and being masters of their own destiny [...] It's a question of fulfillment, as much as anything [...] (Dunn 1999).

The emergence of business entrepreneurship as an appealing concept in the 'Third Age' should, accordingly, be seen as connected both with the protracted sense of time and the increasing call upon ageing subjects to seize opportunities that may produce greater value. More than previous examples (e.g. McArthur's story from *The Independent* article), the appearance of business entrepreneurship demonstrates the inflation of neoliberal ideals such as hyper-individualism (resulting, among others, in constant work on self-worth) and cultivation of human capital within the formation of the normative ageing subject.

(3) *'Here and Now' (2005-2015)*

Many of the lifestyle articles published in various newspapers and magazines published towards the mid-2000s continue to deal with concepts that relate much more to spiritual and psychological questions of third-agers than to corporeal issues. More specifically, articles that revolve around reinvention, adventures of identity, finding passions and creating meaning in one's life become significantly more prominent than those that relate to exercise or to mere leisure. With the demand to redefine retirement alongside the cultural image of baby-boomers as an energetic and fiery cohort, the concept of the 'Third Age' is thus produced in these articles as a revolutionary, life-changing phase.

An article published in *The Daily Telegraph* (30 May, 2006) offers a paradigmatic example of this shift. Entitled 'Touching 60 and opening the throttle: The Third Age used to mean retirement to a quiet life but for the baby boomer generation it's just the start of a brand new adventure,' the article explains that:

RETIREMENT is being redefined by the "baby boomer" generation which is abandoning an afternoon's gentle gardening or conundrum-solving with Des Lynam for adventure sports, exotic travel and personal re-invention.

The old-fashioned notion of retirement is becoming obsolete. In fact, those in retirement say they are busier than ever (Womack 2006).

It seems that what is being stressed here as well as in other articles from this period is that ageing individuals have a plethora of possibilities. Indeed, the emphasis on individuals, along with the injunction of pursuing opportunities for enhancing one's self-worth continue to proliferate during this time-period as well.

In a similar vein, the coalescing image of normative third-agers as cultivating entrepreneurial subjectivity, increasingly sharpens as articles seem to present a shift in the way time is shaped. No longer celebrating the protracted sense of time people in the 'Third Age' are ostensibly able to enjoy, articles tend to contract and accelerate time by emphasizing the importance of the moment of the 'here and now'. Indeed,

while the concept of entrepreneurship as an ideal for normative ageing subjects continues to be highlighted, the conception of time is now presented as limited and contracted. As I discuss below, through the orientation towards the 'here and now,' subjects are urged to pro-actively transform their discontent into entrepreneurial opportunities by making dramatic investments in the present.

As a new discursive trope within these articles, the 'here and now' appears to emphasize third-agers' bursting range of possibilities, while it also functions as stimuli for readers to 'get things going.' As part of the exhortation to reinvent themselves within the moment of the 'here and now,' readers are incited to adopt an ethics of busyness (Ekerdt 1986; Katz 2000). This ethics is informed by an effort to optimize both the extraction of the self and of time. As the article mentioned above later explains:

'Call it retirement if you insist,' they say, 'although renaissance or renewal are more accurate. If you are like the majority of people, your next life will include one or more of these - community service at a high level, a retirement career that uses experience and skills, or a retirement business that lets you express your talents and values' (Womack 2006).

Further on in this article, the example of David and Jennifer Rigby, a baby-boomer couple and their experience of a family vacation is brought forth, to provide a living evidence as well as to bolster the article's main idea:

'When we went to the United States with my wife, my younger daughter Nicole and my son-in-law, they expected me to go shopping in Las Vegas but I thought that was boring so Jennifer and I hired a Harley-Davidson and rode across the Nevada desert instead' (Womack 2006).

Framed as an example that might not be representative but is definitely inspirational, this story illustrates that more than being constantly busy, the normative ageing subject is one who is occupied with especially cutting-edge pursuits. Many articles from this period present a similar narrative, underscoring how 'Third Age' becomes associated

in the cultural imaginary not only with the ethic of busyness, but also with the idea of it being a particularly climactic phase. While the emerging association of 'Third Age' with peaks and achievements that never before were accomplished appears to be typical in articles from the mid-2000, I further suggest that it also constitutes a distinct temporality which grants the present moment unique power.

In the example above, readers are told that for this baby-boomer couple, a mere visit to Las Vegas was too boring and conventional, so, instead, they decided to cross the Nevada desert on motorcycle. In terms of time, this is a form of exploiting the moment to undertake the most exciting and thrilling pursuits. Indeed, time that is not exhausted and stretched to its edge is unworthy. This kind of condensed temporality helps produce compelling conditions for ageing individuals to take, as soon as possible, dramatic decisions that will add something more to their lives. In order to underscore that this is 'good' way of ageing, the article concludes with a note telling the readers that during his later years David Rigby became a business entrepreneur who today earns more money than he ever earned at any other time in his life.

The incitement to take extraordinary decisions at an accelerated pace (which, in turn, grants the present moment unique power), highlights the idea of risk-taking as a dominant theme in third-agers' narratives. In opposition to the emphasis of reducing risks prevalent in earlier articles, risk-taking becomes a pervasive concept that is transmitted through the 'here and now' temporality. More specifically, it seems that only the subjects who embrace the 'here and now' and take risks through engaging in investments are those who are crowned as successful entrepreneurs.

This development appears in an illustrative article published in *The New York Times* (28 September, 2006) under the title: 'In Life's Second Act, Some Take On A

New Role: Entrepreneur,' where the story of Marilyn Grazioli's knitting business is recounted:

'I had been knitting since I was 9, and I always had a dream to work with fibers,' she said. Just then, a knitting store that she and her daughter, Amy Goller, 36, frequented in Royal Oak, Mich., went up for sale. They met with a financial adviser to devise a plan, but decided the purchase price was too high.

But her appetite was whetted. 'I could have gone back to the field where I felt comfortable, but I believe you need to take a risk,' Ms. Grazioli said (Olson 2006).

A prominent motif in articles from the mid-2000s onwards, the concept of fulfilling an old dream in the 'Third Age' facilitates part of the entrepreneurship ideal. In the example above a typical narrative pattern of the dreamers' stories is demonstrated—it begins with an exposition about the emptiness caused by the traditional retirement plan and continues to the point when the ageing individual decides to seize the moment and to take a risk, following an old and dormant dream. The story is organized and based on the monumentality of the present moment in the 'Third Age'—a moment that becomes crucial and thus extremely exciting because of the protagonists' choice to embark on a personal enterprise.

In Marilyn Grazioli's story, it seems that just when she pondered about her childhood dream to work with fibers, the opportunity instantly emerged and a knitting store she knew went up for sale. Even though she was convinced that this business adventure would be too expansive for her, she finally chose to go for it, as opposed to staying in her comfort zone. The decision is described as irrational but ultimately correct. It is a decision that does not look ahead and is not calculated but, rather, is driven by a gut feeling (and a 'whetted appetite') *felt* in the present. Grazioli takes the risk as part of her being in the 'here and now,' and consequently she is celebrated for acting like a true entrepreneur whose path is not a predetermined one.

Interestingly, the orientation towards the 'here and now' alongside the emphasis on entrepreneurship and risk-taking, underscore the affective and emotional dimensions. In line with this discursive development, the trend of lifestyle articles that deal with non-material aspects of ageing increases in 2010 and onwards, where retirement becomes a marginal issue that is ostensibly put aside.

The 'Third Age', however, continues to be shaped and discussed as a period for maximizing enterprises of self-improvement. Many articles report on self-help groups and seminars that coach third-agers through their period of retirement. One paradigmatic example is an article published in *The New York Times* (16 September, 2010) under the title: 'Boot camps for the Retired or Soon to Be.' The article tells about a weekend workshop for third-agers that features 'self-assessment questionnaires, brief lectures, exercises, case studies and small-group discussions' (Pope 2010). The weekend program promises to stay away from financial aspects of the 'Third Age,' or any checklists that provide the participants with a concrete plan: '[T]he center's program aims to build self-awareness rather than provide one-on-one counseling or a didactic transmission of information [...]' (Pope 2010). With this background, the article introduces the experience of one participant:

'At first, I thought I'd just blown \$850,' Ms. Butcher said of the workshop fee. 'I wanted someone to give me a checklist of what to do.'

Midway through the program, she found herself staring at a blank piece of paper, struggling to come up with two or three dreams to share with others. 'I felt such angst because I couldn't think of a thing,' she said. 'Then suddenly -- and I can't explain why -- I saw myself as Dorothy the Brave. I realized I don't have to plan the rest of my life, just the next year. Instantly I knew exactly what to do.'

'I've always played it safe because I didn't want to screw up,' she said. 'The workshop helped me realize I have nothing to fear' (Pope 2010).

The emphasis on the 'here and now' seems to appear in this story as well, while it is articulated more noticeably through the deployment of emotional terms. The anxiety

the participant describes when she faced the blank piece of paper and had to contemplate her dreams in the time that lies ahead is resolved when she decides to focus no further than on the coming year. As opposed to 'playing it safe' previously in her life, the participant feels prepared to act more spontaneously and instinctively, now that she has 'nothing to fear' (Ibid). The participant is, in other words, training herself to live in the moment. This example not only underscores the importance of the 'here and now' to productivity as well as to the injunction of entrepreneurial conduct, but also demonstrates that living in the 'here and now' becomes also an affective imperative.

Another example of how the 'here and now' manifests in a way that replaces the future-oriented temporal register can be seen in an article published in *South Wales Echo* (30 September, 2014) under the title: 'I always regretted not going to university- so I graduated at 73' (Mainwaring 2014). The article frames the story of Barbara Michaels as the story of an ageing woman that refuses to abide by the traditional scheme of retirement:

While many people opt for a quiet life once they become a pensioner, Barbara Michaels doesn't believe in sitting around doing nothing.

And so, when she was just shy of her 70th birthday, she decided to do something she had always regretted not doing and signed up for a BA (Hons) in English Literature at Cardiff University (Mainwaring 2014).

While time is not mentioned directly in this article, since we are told that Michaels is not the kind of pensioner who will sit 'around doing nothing' (Mainwaring 2014), we understand that she does not believe in wasting time. Moreover, readers are told that when Michaels was 'just shy of her 70th birthday' (ibid) she decided to fulfill an old dream. It thus seems that from the very beginning of the article, the value of the present moment is underscored. As the article continues, the reader follows Michaels'

from her university degree to other life-changing transformations during her 'Third Age' period. For example:

Her husband David died from an inoperable brain tumor when he was in his 60s and she was on her own for four-and-a-half years before she met her current partner while on holiday.

He proposed within three weeks of meeting Barbara and, even though she was living in London at the time, she made the brave decision to start a new life with him in Cardiff when she was 63, proving that love has no age barrier either.

'I was terrified about moving down here and even wrote Mel a letter telling him I couldn't do it but I did. It was a risky thing to do, I was leaving all my friends and my social circle but I had the sort of job I could do anywhere and Mel, a builder, couldn't. Cardiff wasn't like it is now back then. There weren't the number of theatres and restaurants and it took a long time to settle but I'm glad I did.

'The children were obviously wary at first but they have grown very fond of him. I suppose I took the bull by the horns and went for it. Sometimes you just have to do that [...]' (Mainwaring 2014).

Even though the article was published when Michaels is 81 years old and reflects on a 20-year period of her life, the narrative contracts time in particular ways. The transitions in Michaels' life are dramatized through the way they are temporally shaped—she was widowed from her husband and met her current partner four years later, whom she married only three weeks after their first meeting. We are not told exactly when her move from London to Cardiff occurred, but we understand it was immediate as well. Moreover, although there is a clear sense of urgency that accompanies Michaels' dramatic, perhaps unexpected decisions, there is also an effort to frame Michaels as someone who nevertheless manages to control this rapid pace. Furthermore, this attribution of "time sovereignty" (Ekerdt 2016) to Michaels gets further intensified through her underlying orientation towards the present moment. In Michaels' own words: 'I suppose I took the bull by the horns and went for it,' it is reflected that her decisions are understood as a gamble with risk involved, while acting decisively in the spur of the moment becomes almost an ethos in her narrative. Indeed,

it is through the rapid pace of Michaels' transitions as well as her instinctive approach to the present that she is endorsed as a courageous, inspirational role model for others.

While the extent to which Michaels' decisions can be recognized as entrepreneurial is arguable, perhaps more important here is that by emphasizing the 'here and now' as a crucial component in Michaels' 'Third Age' phase, her story is recounted as an especially successful one. By aligning herself with the "correct" approach towards the present moment—e.g. acting spontaneously and taking risks rather than calculating them, extracting each moment to the fullest, etc.— Michaels refuses to let personal inhibitions diminish or even delay her potential flourishing. Consequently, she is able to pro-actively navigate various circumstances in order to enhance her possibilities. She is, accordingly, depicted as someone who managed to find new love, get the proper education she never had before, start a life in an unfamiliar place and take care of herself before she becomes a burden on her family.

The contraction of time in the way her story is shaped assists in the portrayal of Michaels as a productive individual who is not afraid to engage in new enterprises on her own. The article underscores how Michaels' entrepreneurial spirit within the 'here and now' alongside the risks that she took helped her to become a better version of herself. By emphasizing the 'here and now' with great intensity, time is contracted in the article in such a way that blurs the distinction between earlier and later phases within Michaels' 20-year period of 'Third Age.' This emphasis is crucial since it prompts an obvious exhortation on ageing subjects to act similarly, by seizing the moment to make something more out of themselves in the present.

As underscored through the various examples above, the emphasis on the 'here and now' indicates that there is a change in the way neoliberal rationality circulates and operates in the popular discourse about ageing. The prominence of the 'here and

now' in these articles suggests that the cost-benefit calculus (in its two versions that were salient in the earlier years), which contains a clear logic of futurity, becomes less central to how neoliberal reason operates and produces its ideal ageing subjects. Instead of involving a desired future, the 'here and now' operates through the contraction of time, where the notion of the future seems less relevant to ageing subjects' investments in themselves. And yet, this new temporal mode becomes a powerful path through which ageing subjects are directed to cultivate neoliberal axioms and ideals that revolve first and foremost around savvy entrepreneurship and investment. Under these ideals, third-agers' are exhorted to constantly evaluate their own skills and to make choices that improve their value. Ultimately, subjects are directed to act as vigilant managers of their 'Third Age' portfolio. Precisely in the case of ageing individuals, being savvy entrepreneurs who make astute investments is a way of constructing the self as worthy human capital rather than disposable matter.

Conclusion

The discursive coalescing of the 'Third Age' is part and parcel of the neoliberalization of old age. As its emergence and appearance in mainstream media over the past three decades reflect, this phrase is seen to govern ageing subjects in their ageing process, whether conceived as risk and/or opportunity, in ways that are constitutive of neoliberal subjectivity.

Moreover, while focusing on the term 'Third Age' in lifestyle articles, and even more specifically, on these articles' exhortation to ageing subjects to engage in various forms of self-investments as an inherent part of their responsibility in managing their own ageing process in the 'right' way, we witness a key shift in the way they are interpellated. Namely, risk calculating ageing individuals are increasingly represented

as entrepreneurial human capital that take risks as part of their self-optimization. The shift in the kind of subjectivity ageing subjects are called to cultivate is accompanied by another, temporal shift, whereby the cost-benefit calculus is gradually replaced by an emphasis on the 'here and now.' Within this transition, the increasing exhortation to ageing subjects to constantly invest in improving, upgrading and optimizing their selves, operates through a present-oriented temporality.

Finally, in contrast to what many scholars (Ahmed 2010; Brown 2015; Rottenberg 2014a, 2014b, 2017) describe as neoliberalism's future-oriented temporality, analysis of 'Third Age' shows that contemporary popular representations of ageing subjects register a sense of time that is dependent on the 'here and now,' where the *present* moment is that which bears value, and not the future. While further analysis needs to be carried out in order to better understand the particular ways in which this emerging temporal mode operates within neoliberal rationality, I would like to suggest that with regards to ageing subjects, the emphasis on the 'here and now' creates a field of affect whereby ageing subjects are urged to make investments in the present while endowing these investments as immediately good and beneficial in and of themselves. Furthermore, through the disavowal of the future it appears that the present moment towards which ageing subjects are directed becomes continuous in a way that exhorts them to continue investing. Thus, my suggestion is that this emphasis might operate as a neoliberal mechanism that helps to produce a new normative ageing subject as one who continuously invests and who confirms the investments as unequivocally good, regardless of any prospects in the future (so it seems). Finally, this temporal shift, which has emerged so strikingly in relation to ageing individuals, underscores that within neoliberal governmentality there is not a single temporal register and time can be tailored towards the particular population being interpellated.

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Notes

¹ These films vary in genre, and mostly become successful in US and UK box-offices. In the section of romantic comedies: *Something's gotta give* (2003) starring Diane Keaton and Jack Nicholson, *It's Complicated* (2009) starring Meryl Streep and Alec Baldwin, *Hope Springs* (2012) starring Meryl Streep and Tommy Lee Jones. In the section of adventure or second-chance films: *The Magic of Belle Isle* (2012) starring Morgan Freeman, *Quartet* (2012) which is also Dustin Hoffman's first directed film (at the age of 75), *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* (first released in 2011, second released in 2015) starring Judi Dench, Maggie Smith, Bill Nighy and Tom Wilkinson, *Woman in Gold* (2015) starring Helen Mirren, *The Intern* (2015) starring Robert De Niro. In the section of action thrillers: *Stand Up Guys* (2012) starring Al Pacino and Christopher Walken, *Last Vegas* (2013) starring Robert De Niro, Michael Douglas and Morgan Freeman, *Red* (first in 2010, second in 2013 and third is expected in 2016) starring Helen Mirren, John Malkovich and Morgan Freeman, *All is Lost* (2015) starring Robert Redford.

² Prior to Laslett's book, the 'Third Age' term first appeared in the name of the 'University of the Third Age,' a movement of pensioners learning communities. The movement was first established in France in 1973 ('Université du Troisième Age') and then in the United Kingdom in 1981 (Laslett among its founders) (The University of The Third Age. *Our Story* [online]. Available from: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/about/history>) [Accessed February 2018]. Moreover, drawing on sociologist Rémi Lenoir's (1979) analysis, Silva (2008) underscores that in the French scenario, the emergence of the 'Third Age' as a notion related to old age occurred during the shift in the discourses and practices devoted to old age that began to improve and develop from the mid-1900s. In addition, the term has gained further currency during the 1960-1970 with the urban middle classes reaching to retirement (Lenoir 1979 cited Silva 2008, p. 8).

³ In his study of the alarmist discourse around the growing ageing population, Stephen Katz argues that crucial elements of this discourse date back to marginalizing and degrading old age institutions and population policies from early 19th century (Katz 1992). Katz focuses on central historical developments that have established the elderly as a special demographic group during the 19th century in Europe, and reveals how these developments are inherently connected to the early formation of the alarmist discourse. His work thus illuminates that rather than a new sensibility that has emerged in recent years, the alarmist tone towards the ageing population is an

historical construction. See: Katz, S., 1992. Alarmist demography: Power, knowledge, and the elderly population. *Journal of aging studies*, 6(3), pp.203-225.

⁴ Pictures and photographs were not included in my analysis partly because these were not accessible from the LexisNexis database I used.

⁵ For further explanation about Boolean search logic see LexisNexis information page (online). Available from: <https://www.lexisnexis.com/communities/academic/w/wiki/31.academic-help-all-news.aspx> [Accessed 19 February 2018].

⁶ See: Rozanova, J., Northcott, H.C. and McDaniel, S.A., 2006. Seniors and portrayals of intra-generational and inter-generational inequality in the *Globe and Mail*. *Canadian Journal on Aging/La Revue canadienne du vieillissement*, 25(4), pp.373-386; Rozanova, J., 2006. Newspaper portrayals of health and illness among Canadian seniors: Who ages healthily and at what cost?. *International Journal of Ageing and Later Life*, 1(2), pp.111-139; Rozanova, J., 2010. Discourse of successful aging in The *Globe & Mail*: Insights from critical gerontology. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 24(4), pp.213-222; Sawchuk, D., 2015. Aging and older adults in three Roman Catholic magazines: Successful aging and the Third and Fourth Ages reframed. *Journal of aging studies*, 35, pp.221-228.

⁷ It is crucial to underscore that these post-retirement themes are mainly addressed to middle-class readers who can afford to retire, live off a comfortable pension, and have the resources to invest their time in lifestyle or self-reinvention activities. Alongside these class inflected themes there is also a racial undercurrent, since practically all the interviewees (together with the life experiences they reveal) are white.

⁸ As Marhánková (2010) mentions, in 1990 the World Health Organization adopted the term 'active ageing,' which is based on the concept of 'individuals actively and systematically influencing the conditions of their ageing' (Marhánková 2010, p. 5), with physical fitness being a dominant method among others concerned with self-care (Marhánková 2010).

⁹ Additionally, a new form of coverage becomes more popular during these years, one that focuses on specific ageing individuals, who can potentially serve as role models, and who share stories from their upbeat and vibrant 'Third Age' period. I suggest that this change in form— from a coverage of ageing-related themes through journalistic research, interviews with experts etc., to a coverage that revolves sometimes solemnly around personal stories and experiences—can be understood to demonstrate the intensification of cultural neoliberal inclinations towards individualization and responsabilization.

¹⁰ It is worth mentioning that more emphasis on temporal protraction appears during this time-period, in such a way that goes hand in hand with the increasing mention of baby-boomers as the dominant cohort of the 'Third Age.'¹⁰ The reference to baby-boomers enhances the notion that this generation of ageing individuals are unwilling to settle for the traditional and boring concept of retirement. Instead, as many of these articles proclaim, '[...] they are, in typical boomer fashion, determined to reinvent

retirement' (Kadaba & Giordano 2005); 'For this generation, forget about "senior centers." And no bingo!' (Ibid). Additionally, in their study, Jönson & Jönsson (2015) review Swedish newspapers published throughout 1992-2012 in order to trace the changes that occur within baby-boomers' representation in the print media. Interestingly, they point to a stark juxtaposition made in numerous articles between the older care users (i.e. the preceding generation of the baby-boomers) and the future ones (i.e. the baby-boomers). Jönson & Jönsson find that: '[T]he idealized baby boomers presented [...] are described in a way that strips the category of care users of some essential characteristics, including extreme frailty, dependence, vulnerability, and (for some) decreased cognitive capacities. The care users of the future is described as a person capable of planning and directing the type of help they need. (Jönson & Jönsson 2015, p. 87).

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